Lothian NHS Board

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Date 08/05/2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11391

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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – SOLID TUMOUR GENOMIC TESTING

I write in response to your request for information in relation to solid tumour genomic testing

Question:
1. The definition of test turnaround time you use for reporting, including key data points (e.g. when you start and stop the clock).

Answer:

Test turnaround time (TAT) is defined as the period from the point at which the laboratory has received a valid test request and all required components necessary to commence testing, to the point at which the authorised laboratory report is issued.

The required components to initiate testing may include, as applicable:

- A completed request form
- Diagnostic pathology report and/or H&E slide
- FFPE tissue block or other required tissue material
- Blood or other relevant specimen

The TAT clock does not start until all required materials have been received. The turnaround time ends when the report is fully authorised.

Question:
2. The average annual turnaround time for the solid tumour genomic testing that you have performed.

Answer:

Target turnaround data per assay is available at: Scottish Genomic Test Directories - Scottish Strategic Network for Genomic Medicine

The following data is the percentage of reports that were authorised within the target turnaround time.

2023/24	96%
2024/25	95.7%
2025/26	94.8%

Question:

3. How test failures are accounted when calculating the turnaround time for a sample (e.g. do you restart the clock or do allow the clock to continue running).

Answer:

The turnaround time clock is not restarted in the event of a test or assay failure. Where an assay fails and requires repeat testing, this repeat is undertaken within the original turnaround time target wherever possible. If the requirement for repeat testing results in the turnaround time target being exceeded, this is recorded as a breach. At no point is the turnaround time clock paused or reset.

Test failures are recorded and monitored to identify trends.

Question:

I would like to request the following information about test failures for your three most recent reporting years:

4. The total number of solid tumour samples received for genomic testing.

Answer:

2023/24	3,957
2024/25	3,745
2025/26	4,380

Question:

5. a. The total number of solid tumour samples that your service received that were of insufficient quality or quantity on receipt for genomic testing and were not tested
   b. What are the top 3 cancer types associated with QNS issues at sample triage?or were tested using a different method.

Answer:

a.	23 samples were refused testing due to being of insufficient quality/quantity for testing
b.	Data not collected

Question:

6. The total number of solid tumour genomic tests performed.

Answer:

The number of genomic tests performed on each sample received varies depending on clinical diagnosis/testing algorithm that is applied.

We are unable to provide a single, accurate figure for “the total number of solid tumour genomic tests performed” over the requested three-year period.

Question:

7. a. The total number of solid tumour genomic tests that were initiated and failed due to sample quality and/or sample quantity issues (exclude re-tests of unique samples).
   b. What are the top 3 cancer types associated with QNS issues driving test failures?

Answer:

a.	2023-2024 - 52 2024-2025 - 69 2025-2026 - 74
b.	Data not collected

I hope the information provided helps with your request.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request, \you do have the right to request us to review it. Your request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt. If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain dissatisfied with this, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner within 6 months of receipt of our review response. You can do this by using the Scottish Information Commissioner’s Office online appeals service at www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal. If you remain dissatisfied with the Commissioner’s response you then have the option to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law.

If you require a review of our decision to be carried out, please write to the FOI Reviewer at the email address at the head of this letter. The review will be undertaken by a Reviewer who was not involved in the original decision-making process.

FOI responses (subject to redaction of personal information) may appear on NHS Lothian’s Freedom of Information website at: https://org.nhslothian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
Executive Director, Nursing
Cc: Chief Executive